

**Corliss High School, Chicago, IL** - Good morning to the elected officials, school administrators, teachers, and especially to you, the students of Corliss High School.

I am proud to be with you this morning as you welcome world-famous musicians Herbie Hancock, Bobby Watson, Thelonious Monk, Jr. and the widely-respected Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz to one of the *homes* of jazz – Chicago! This is the perfect place for the Institute to launch its "Jazz in America: The National Jazz Curriculum."

Music historians generally agree that jazz began around the turn of the 20th Century in New Orleans, as well as in Chicago, Kansas City and St. Louis. A mixture of gospel, blues, ragtime and even classical, jazz is a musical representation of the American experience. There are several jazz "styles," but the "Chicago Style" is credited with bringing more harmony and technically proficient musicians to jazz. In other words, some of the best players came from Chicago!

In an era when it's more likely for a music program to be cut, we applaud The Thelonious Monk Institute and the

Chicago Public Schools for developing and supporting "Jazz in America." This curriculum will cultivate important skills like discipline, and inspire some truly American ideals – creativity, self-expression and innovation.

Thank you.